

Understanding the communicative environment - I

NPTEL

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*MOOC
Soft skills
development*

Overview

- About the course
- Soft skills and communication
- What is communication?
 - Definition and examples
- The mechanism(s) of communication?
 - The different models
 - Barriers and filters

About the course

- Please refer to the introductory video and outline
- Discussion forum
- Surveys
- Quizzes
- Other activities using social media (announced in Discussion forum)

Soft skills and communication

Soft skills

- **Social graces**
 - **Communication abilities**
 - **Language skills**
 - **Personal habits**
 - **Cognitive or emotional empathy**
 - **Leadership traits**
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- Hard skills are easily quantifiable and measurable... soft skills are not so easy to pin point

What is communication?

- It is probably a difficult question to answer when one is immersed in communication... especially when everyone has her idea of what it is, without having to define it.
- So let us just explore it and then we can get a definite idea.

Overt and covert

- Can you think of a situation when one doesn't communicate anything?
- Sleeping!
- Dead!

Whodunit?

- Sherlock Holmes
- Deciphering the erased lines of the communication path



1904 illustration by Sidney Paget (Wikipedia)

What communicates?

- Body
- Action/non-action
- Words/silence
- Dress
- Environment
- Images and things
- What else?...

But communication is not simple!

- Multiple channels of communication
- Ambiguity
 - Snow in my shoe
 - Abandoned
 - Sparrow's nest
 - (Haiku, Jack Kerouac. Source: Wikipedia)
- Interpretation

Interpretation

- The six blind men and the elephant
 - It is like a tree
 - It is like a snake
 - It is like a wall
 - It is hard and pointed
 - It is like a saucer
 - It is like a roof

Channels of communication

- Words
 - Spoken
 - Written
- Non-Words
 - Sound
 - Colour
 - Light
 - Image & object
 - Body
 - environment

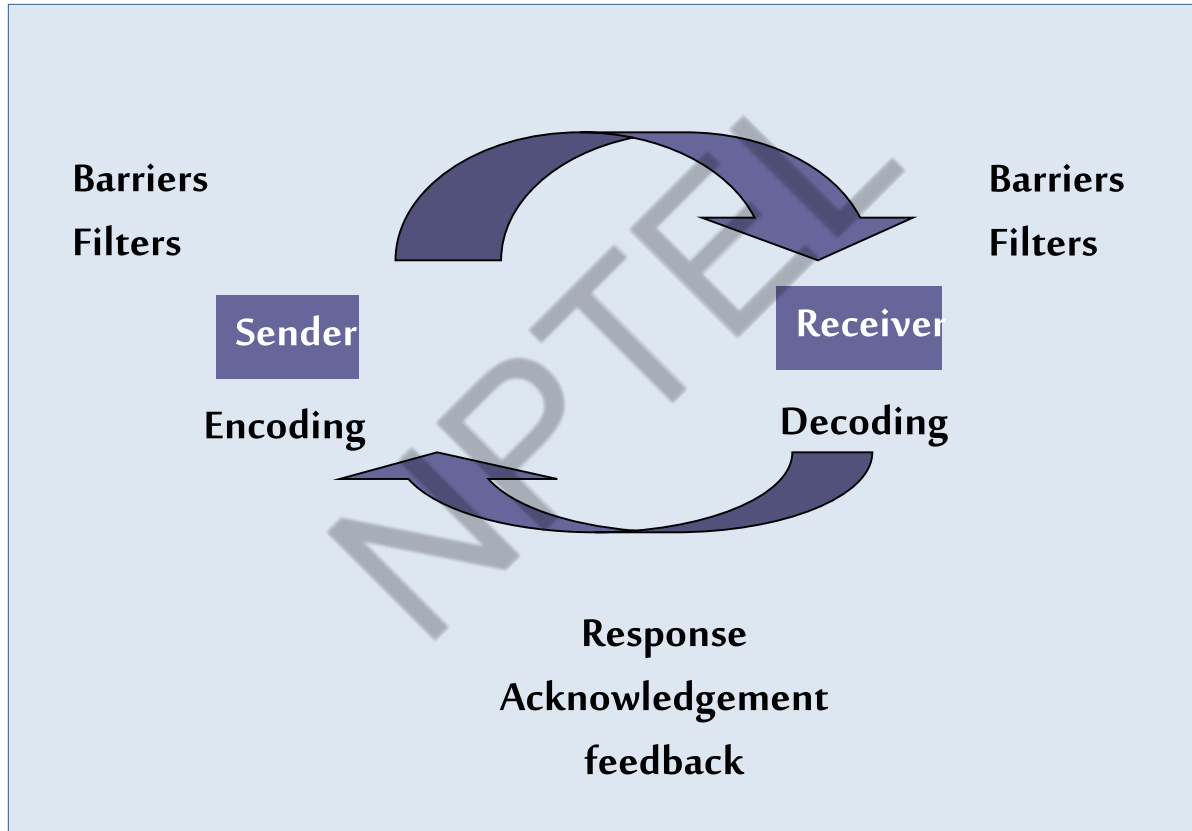
Models of communication

- Shannon & Weaver (1949)
 - Sender-Receiver
- Berlo (1960)
 - Sender-Message-Channel-Receiver
- Barnlund (1970)
 - Transactional model of communication
- Constructionist Model (Goffman, and many other contemporary theorists)
 - Noise, decode, encode, channel, feedback, etc

The process: linear



The infinity model



What affects communication?

- Filters
- Barriers

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Filters

Interpretation depends on the filters used.

- Knowledge
- Status
- Culture
- Emotions
- Context
- Gender
- Age, etc

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Barriers

- Anything that obstructs communication
 - Internal
 - Dogma
 - Emotions
 - Medium
 - External
 - Noise
 - Interference

Summary of key points

- Communication is a key dimension of soft skills
- Communication involves agents, interpretation and channels of communication
- It also includes sender, receiver, filters and barriers, encoding and decoding, as well as a context

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